

Kitchen Safety For Kids

Kitchens are a great place for families to spend time together, especially during the holidays. With good supervision, they can also be a safe place. Here are some tips from the Utah Department of Health Violence and Injury Prevention Program and Safe Kids Utah:



- Never leave a child unattended in the kitchen. Close supervision is key, whether children are helping an adult cook or simply watching.
- Never hold a child while cooking.
- Put pans on back burners and turn all pot handles toward the back of the stove.
- Never let a child under age 10 remove heated items from the microwave.
- Wear close-fitting clothing when cooking: long, loose sleeves can catch fire on the stove.
- Don't leave cooking food unattended – it is the number one cause of house fires.
- Place hot foods and liquids away from the edges of counters and tables.
- Have a fire extinguisher nearby.
- Pay special attention to items sitting on tablecloths or placemats. Young children often try to reach for things, and can be seriously burned when they pull hot food or liquid down onto themselves.

Age-Appropriate Tasks for Children



Generally, children under age 10 don't really understand what danger means, so they shouldn't handle the stove, electrical appliances, sharp utensils or hot dishes. Younger children can begin helping in the kitchen with basics like washing vegetables and fruits, or other tasks that don't require sharp knives, appliances or heat.

Following are a few activities and age guidelines the National SAFE KIDS Campaign recommends to help keep the kitchen a fun, safe place for the family. With close adult supervision, children can:

Over age 5

- Stir ingredients together in a bowl.
- Rinse foods under cold water.
- Use a cookie cutter to cut out shapes in dough.

Over age 9

- Use a butter knife or plastic knife to spread peanut butter, or slice soft cheese.

Over age 10

- Squeeze garlic from a garlic press.
- Use electrical appliances like a blender, food processor, electric mixer, microwave or toaster oven.

Ages 12 and up

- Chop or slice with a paring knife.
- Use the stovetop to turn burners on and off and select oven temperature.
- Flip pancakes on a hot griddle.
- Place a tray of cookies in the oven.
- Peel vegetables.
- Use an electric can opener.
- Shred cheese with a hand grater.

Age 14 and up

- Operate the stovetop without adult supervision.
- Drain cooked spaghetti into a colander.
- Remove a tray of cookies from the oven.

Now, let's get cooking!